

Serial No.: 10/053,666
Atty. Docket No.: P67552US0

REMARKS

The Final Office Action mailed May 17, 2006, has been carefully reviewed and, by this Amendment, Applicants have amended claims 15, 28 and 30. Claims 15, 19-28, 30 and 32-34 are pending in the application. Claims 15, 27, 28 and 30 are independent.

The Examiner rejected claims 15, 19, 21-23, 26, 27, 30 and 32-34 under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,234,423 to Hirahara et al. ("Hirahara"). Under 35 U.S.C. 103(a), the Examiner rejected claim 20 as being unpatentable over Hirahara in view of U.S. Patent No. 3,102,559 to Koppelman et al. ("Koppelman").

In Applicants' previous Amendment filed on February 22, 2006 ("the February Amendment"), the above rejections were fully discussed and the Examiner is requested to reconsider Applicants' remarks therein in view of the foregoing amendments to the claims and the following further clarification.

In the Examiner's Response to Arguments portion of the Office Action, addressing Applicants' remarks set forth in the February Amendment, the Examiner cited the definition of "fitting" provided on-line by www.wikipedia.org. According to this on-line encyclopedia, the word "fitting" broadly means "a part that can attach two or more larger parts".

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In the his outlined position in view of Hirahara, the Examiner states that the fitting corresponds with the component identified by reference numeral 13b and the bearing is represented by the component identified by reference numeral 13a. Applicants do not agree, however, that component 13b can properly be identified as a "fitting".

As summarized in the February Amendment, Hirahara is directed to a method of making a composite material airfoil structure which includes the U-shaped spar 13 bonded to the upper and lower skins 11 and 12 (column 4, lines 50-60). In forming the spar, a laminate of composite prepreg is formed into the illustrated U-shaped cross sectional shape and molded under heat (see column 6, lines 6-11). The spar is then fitted to the upper and lower skins, as shown in Figure 9, and pressed by load application blocks 34 in a bonding jig 30 to form a *single structure* (see Figures 11 and 12; column 6, lines 18-29).

Neither 13a nor 13b are used to *connect* the resulting single structure airfoil to the aircraft structural component. Hence, neither 13a nor 13b constitutes a fitting, either as the term is used in the claimed invention or as *the term is defined in wikipedia*. Instead, the flanges 13a and the web 13b are part of the airfoil structure and in themselves do not connect anything

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except the upper and lower skins to one another. Without a fitting the flanges 13a and the web 13b do not *and cannot* connect the composite airfoil structure to the airplane wing. And nothing in Hirahara discloses or suggests such a connection function.

The actual *fitting* component that is used to connect the composite airfoil structure of Hirahara to the aircraft structural component is not discussed therein. Instead it is only outlined in Figures 1 and 2 by the unnumbered vertical members extending between the top and bottom flanges 13a and generally parallel with the web 13b. Annotated copies of Figures 1 and 2 are attached in which the vertical members are identified by the reference character "X".

Again, there is nothing in Hirahara to suggest that fitting X is made as part of the composite structure represented by the skins and the spar. Rather, it is evident from the complete absence of any discussion beyond the spar flanges 13a and web 13b that whatever is represented by the vertical members X of Figures 1 and 2 is a separate component added *after* production of the composite structure (see the discussion of the load application blocks 34 in the February Amendment and in Hirahara, column 6, lines 5-29). And there is nothing in Hirahara to suggest that the fitting X is or could be made of composite, particularly when

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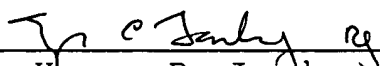

conventional wisdom consistently teaches that fittings are made of metal such as aluminum or titanium alloys.

Applicants have amended claims 15, 28 and 30 only to clarify that the fitting is indeed the component *that connects* the movable part with the structural component. As this is already clearly stated in unamended claim 27, these clarifying amendments to claims 15, 28 and 29 set forth herein do not raise new issues requiring further consideration and/or search and are proper after Final Action. Entry thereof and allowance of the application is requested.

With this amendment and the foregoing remarks, it is respectfully submitted that the present application is in condition for allowance. Should the Examiner have any questions or comments, the Examiner is cordially invited to telephone the undersigned attorney so that the present application can receive an early Notice of Allowance.

Respectfully submitted,

JACOBSON HOLMAN PLLC

By  Reg. No. 40,495
 Harvey B. Jacobson, Jr.
Reg. No. 20,851

400 Seventh Street, NW
Washington, D.C. 20004-2201
Telephone: (202) 638-6666
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FIG. 1

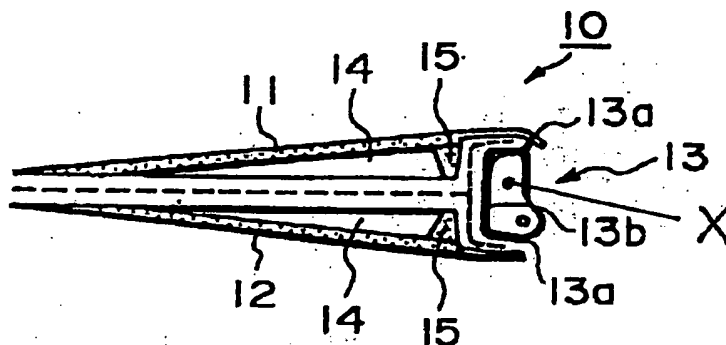
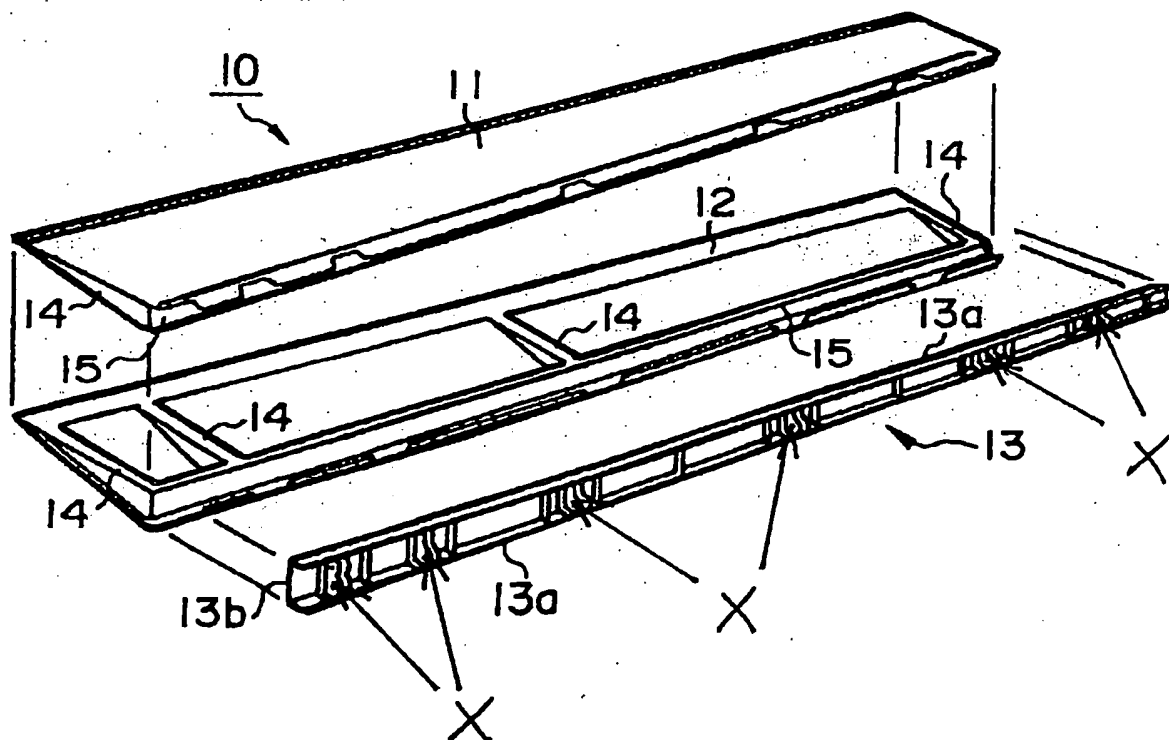


FIG. 2



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